



Battelle President Jeffrey Wadsworth was one of several dignitaries who helped dedicate the Center for Advanced Energy Studies building on Feb. 20. The dedication took place exactly two years after Idaho leaders and others broke ground on the building.

## Universities, elected officials dedicate Center for Advanced Energy Studies

by [Kortny Rolston](#), *INL Communications & Public Affairs*

Two years after Idaho National Laboratory, congressional, state and local officials broke ground on the Center for Advanced Energy Studies, they gathered again last month to celebrate its completion.

More than 100 people attended the Feb. 20 dedication of the 55,000-square-foot building along the banks of the Snake River in Idaho Falls. They toured the labs, learned about CAES research initiatives and heard statements from Gov. C.L. "Butch" Otter, the Idaho congressional delegation and other dignitaries.

All who spoke during the hour-long program hailed the day as a landmark for Idaho and the country and as another step toward America achieving energy independence.

"There is no doubt that over the next two or three decades the most important issue facing America in our quality of life and the American economy is going to be the availability and cost of energy," said Sen. Jim Risch, R-Idaho. "Idaho is uniquely positioned to lead the country in the search for better and cheaper forms of energy. I have every confidence that Idaho and this facility will lead the way."

The dedication took place exactly two years after ground was broken for CAES. And to many, it was the culmination of an idea first conceived five years ago by the Department of Energy's Office of Nuclear Energy.

Bill Magwood, former director of DOE's Nuclear Energy Office, and others envisioned a center that would promote energy research, address the shortage of workers in the nuclear field and help universities collaborate with INL, its lead nuclear energy research facility.

Rep. Mike Simpson, R-Idaho, said although construction on the CAES building started in 2007, the concept of a collaborative research center was years in the making.

He recalled discussing the idea with DOE and other members of Idaho's congressional delegation before the INL contract was rebid in 2004.

"One of the visions we had collectively, I believe, was 'How do we integrate the great universities we have in this state with private industry, with the federal government and with the state government to advance this lab and the energy needs in this country?'" Simpson said during the dedication. "This is the result of those discussions."

CAES has since evolved into a public/private partnership between INL and the state's three public research universities – Boise State University, Idaho State University and the University of Idaho. The schools have staff at the Idaho Falls building and also several professors who work with INL — through CAES — on research projects for government and private industry.

While the building has been a major focus, CAES Director Harold Blackman said CAES partners have been busy fulfilling the mission set out by DOE.

CAES research is focused on nuclear science and engineering, materials science, bioenergy, carbon management and energy policy. DOE also recently asked CAES to administer its Nuclear Energy University Program, which funds research at U.S. universities and provides scholarships and fellowships to nuclear science students. The federal program also pays for equipment and infrastructure upgrades at universities to improve their ability to conduct nuclear energy research and development.

"This program has been built with the cooperation of your three state universities and the Idaho National Laboratory," Blackman said at the



**CAES Director Harold Blackman, Battelle President Jeffrey Wadsworth, Rep. Mike Simpson, R-Idaho, and Sen. Jim Risch, R-Idaho, toured the laboratories at the Center for Advanced Energy Studies during the Feb. 20 building dedication.**

dedication. "We're busy already doing research and educating students for the benefit of the state of Idaho and the country."

Watch a video of CAES dedication at its [Web site](#).

Make an appointment to tour CAES by calling 526-0962.

[Feature Archive](#)